

cont.
C4
C. issuing a command from the control device identified in step B; and

D. automatically enabling the field of view of the camera to the field of view remembered in step A and associated with the control device identified in step B.

REMARKS

1-2. With regard to the rejection of Claims 12, 51-57, 59-60, 63-79 and 83-108 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being obvious in light of Fabris '156, it is important to understand that the Fabris system is fundamentally different than the present invention. Fabris discloses a teleconferencing site 10 to be controlled by a single conference leader at chair 105 via a single control console 130. Fabris does mention "operators" (plural at line 30 of col. 42) but does not disclose a system that has more than one person operating the entire system nor does he disclose two or more consoles or touchscreens. The use of the plural in line 30 indicates only that the system can be operated by one person from a pool of "relatively unskilled operators" which is the entire rationale of the disclosure or that more than one teleconferencing site is being used. Moreover, Fabris does not disclose multiple command input stations, a feature that is precisely the objective of the present invention. Fabris does not disclose or suggest having more than one operator controlling the system via two or more control devices that send commands.

All commands in Fabris originate at the touch screen 134 physically located at console 130. As stated in Col. 12, lines 1-8, the user (1) picks a system element such as a camera, (2) picks an action (pan, tilt, etc.) or display (a particular display) followed by (3) pressing the "GO" icon 904 to create a control sentence. See also col. 17, "Menu and Menu Sequences" and col. 21, lines 10-54.

The use of "GO" icon 904 does not result in "tracking" as the term is usually used and understood. Assuming a valid control

sentence has been constructed, the touching of element 904 simply activates the functions requested. This is surely not "automatically tracking at least one of the remote control devices by touch screen on the remote control device by selecting a camera and issuing a "command", as the Examiner asserts in paragraph 2. Indeed the touch screen is not one of at least two remote control devices--it is the only control device and it is neither remote from the console nor is it movable. It is essential in Fabris to have everything (including field of view variables) controlled from console 130 by one relatively unskilled operator.

Prior to amendment as discussed hereinbelow, the present invention recited in Claim 51 "at least two control devices capable of sending commands to the automatic control system", lines 3-5, and in step C" identifying the control device that issued the command in step B". Fabris does not disclose or suggest how two remote control devices would work in the disclosed system.

With respect to presets, Fabris states that "six of these preset positions are defined at system installation for each of the sidewall cameras 140 and 141. Two additional presets are available through an additional menu which permits continuously variable camera pointing, zoom and focus" (Col. 12, lines 16-21). Moreover, the two additional presets "are valid only for the duration of the conference during which those presets are defined". Col. 12, lines 27-29. Fabris does not at all disclose or suggest a system that automatically identifies which of at least two control devices has issued a command and remembers which device issued the command so as to operate the system automatically to move the field of view of the camera to the remembered field of view associated with the remembered control device that issued the command in the first place.

In summary, Fabris is a central controller with improvements thereto which is the exact opposite of the present invention that discloses a distributed control network where each of the at least two remote controllers is unique, is automatically identified as such, and is acted upon accordingly.

With respect to the enumerated objections to Claims 52-57, 59-60, 63-79 and 83-108, the applicant's repeat the comments with respect to Claims 12 and 51. Fabris is simply a fundamentally different system than that disclosed in the present invention. While Fabris may recite limitations and capabilities that are functionally similar to those of the present invention, applicants do not believe that Fabris teaches or suggests how to accomplish the Fabris system results in the context of the applicant's invention which employs, inter alia, movable control devices in a distributed network arrangement which is quite distinct from the Fabris central controller approach.

Claims 51-68, 105 and 108 have been amended to recite that the at least two control devices included are each movable independently of said automatic control system and the cameras by a user to a selected location and that the field of view is associated with a control device in a location selected by a user thus clearly distinguishing over Fabris. Fabris does not teach or suggest the use of at least two independently movable control devices which constitute a central feature of the present invention. Accordingly, applicants believe that Claims 12, 51-57, 59-60, 63-79 and 83-108 are patentable over the cited art.

3. With regard to the rejection of Claims 58, 61, and 62 as allegedly being obvious in light of Fabris and Blackshear, the comments of paragraph 1-2 hereinabove are also relevant. Neither Fabris or Blackshear teach or suggest the present invention which includes, among other things, control of the iris of a camera from at least two independently movable remote control devices. Claims 58, 61, 62 all now depend from Claim 51 (Amended) and are not obvious in light of the cited art and thus are believed to be patentable.

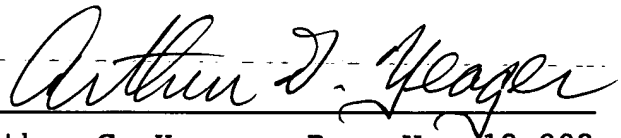
4. With regard to the rejection of Claims 80-82 as allegedly being obvious in light of Fabris and Sand, the comments of Paragraphs 1-3 hereinabove are applicable. The present invention employs independently movable control devices. Moreover, Claim 80 does not recite multiple automatic control systems but rather

groups of movable control devices for purposes of audio signal operation and control. Accordingly, Claims 80-82 which ultimately depend from Claim 68 (Amended), are not obvious in light of Fabris and Sand and thus are believed to be patentable.

5. Applicants note the citation of Ashida '721 but do not agree with the Examiner's characterization of the system therein. Ashida '721 is directed to a stationary voice-actuated camera pointing system and a group of stationary microphones. Ashida does not claim the capability of tracking. Indeed, Ashida does not appear to use the word "track" in either the specification or the claims. Accordingly, applicants believe that the Examiners' contention that Ashida is an automatic tracking system is erroneous.

A telephone interview is respectfully requested prior to any final action on the merits to resolve any remaining issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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